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IN COMMUNIST CHINA

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PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE COMMUNES
IN COMMUNIST CHINA

[The following is a translation of a feature article written by Masao Fukushima. Comments and notes by Fukushima are enclosed in parentheses and those by the translator, in brackets. This article appears in Ajia Keizai Jumbo, No 411, Tokyo, 20 October 1959, pages 1-17.]

A panel discussion on communes was held on 25 August 1959 in Peiping for a group of Japanese jurists visiting China. WANG Lu, Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Producer Cooperatives, Seventh Staff Office of the State Council, made a report at the meeting. His report is considered important because he is one of the officials [in charge of the commune affairs] and he succinctly explained the current problems confronting the communes. Because of lack of time his statement after Section Three was proportionally shorter. It seems to us that the analysis of various contradictions arising out of the establishment of communes is receiving major attention. Since he spoke without a prepared text, there were repetitions on a number of points raised, but we are presenting his statement in full. Although it was called a panel discussion, there was no question period. After the meeting, we could manage to get the explanation that the frequently used term, "stipulations of law," refers to the laws and regulations passed by the State Council and the resolutions and instructions of the Communist Party. We have also learned that his statement covers changes and developments since the Wuhan Conference. Two days after we heard WANG Lu's report, we read an official bulletin concerning the Eighth All China Congress.

[End of introductory remarks by Fukushima]

It has been nearly one year since the people's communes were established in 1958. I would like to explain the commune system in four Sections as follows:

1. Conditions Prior to and After the Establishment

- of People's Communes, and the Merger of Cooperatives and Administrative Organs
2. Ownership System and Distribution System
 3. Two Kinds of Contradictions
 4. Family Life

Section One: Conditions Prior to and After the Establishment of People's Communes, and the Merger of Cooperatives and Administrative Organs

As you have noticed, in China there are few trees, and many rivers have not been controlled; while the southern part of China suffers from droughts, the northern part is stricken with floods. The main cause for the failure to meet these calamities was the series of wars raged in China for more than one hundred years. The havoc done by the wars was great; forests were destroyed and rivers have been in a condition beyond repair. As a result farming was adversely affected and was placed in a constantly precarious condition. The problem of improving irrigation and natural conditions was raised and became important after the establishment of agricultural producer cooperatives. More than anything else, farmers desired irrigation, reforestation, and the improvement of soil, because progress in agriculture depends on these factors.

During the past decade alone, an average of hundreds of millions of mou (One mou is 0.6 hectare) of land were afflicted during a normal year, and as a consequence of millions of people suffered. It goes without saying that the general public has been keenly interested in the leadership of the Party and the Government on this matter.

Two Attitudes Toward Calamities on the Part of Farmers

Farmers manifested two different attitudes toward the calamities. First, there was the attitude, "one cannot do anything about this kind of calamity." A sense of resignation was expressed, as for example, in Lao Tsu's idea of non-action. People who held the other attitude categorically denied such an attitude of non-action, and emphasized the necessity of liberating themselves from conditions of poverty or from what Chairman Mao calls the conditions of (1) poverty, and (2) nothingness (first, poor, and second, blank). Such an attitude was manifested in the following instance. During 1956 and 1957 parts of Honan Province suffered from floods and droughts. Inhabitants of a part of the province asked for relief from the government. A prompt response came from the

government, and cash and goods were rushed to the scene. However, the inhabitants were not satisfied with what they had received, and moved out of the province. They moved to towns nearby or to Mukden to the northeast. On the other hand, people in other areas were not discouraged of the calamities, but instead pulled their energies together to build reservoirs or dig wells. The living conditions of the people at that time were certainly bad; they worked more than 12 hours a day, and sometimes worked day and night. They thought it was better to fight bitterly than to be defeated. Thus, they settled down there, and steadily improved their works. The Chinese Communist Party arrived at the conclusion that the prospect for future would be good if experiences of this kind were carefully examined, if plans are made on the basis of the stark reality of China characterized by the conditions of "first poor and second nothing," and if the farmers struggle collectively against the calamities.

Problems Connected with Large Scale Irrigation Projects

In 1957, large scale irrigation, reforestation, and flood control projects were launched throughout the nation. A number of problems beset these projects.

First, it was discovered that the conventional "high" agricultural producer cooperatives were too small for this type of projects. The average number of households in an agricultural producer cooperative was between 150 and 160--too small in size to undertake such a large project by itself. Therefore, we came to the conclusion that the gigantic task of irrigation could not be pushed ahead unless the size of cooperatives was expanded. In addition to this problem there was a problem concerning land. Lands were needed to open channels, but the members of cooperatives located in an area losing land were naturally unhappy and the people who were not affected showed an indifferent attitude. These conflicting attitudes adversely affected the progress of the irrigation projects. Thus we came to the conclusion that we had to expand the size of agricultural cooperatives.

Second, by the time the irrigation projects were advancing, farmers and the staff members of government organs on basic levels carried on the merger of three cooperatives, namely, agricultural producer cooperatives, supply and marketing cooperatives, and credit cooperatives. The merger of four cooperatives was the next step. In this case, the body which was the outcome of the merger of three cooperatives was again merged with handicraft

industry cooperatives. Thus farmers organized various forces. It was at this time that the slogan, "let us make progress by pulling forces together as though making a rope," originated. If every one attended solely to one's own business, things could not be done, and thus it would be impossible to carry out the socialist motto [to produce] "much, fast, well, and economically."

Recognizing the value of the merger, the Chinese Communist Party supported it; and the merger of three and four kinds of cooperatives took place in Fukien and other southern provinces.

Third, there was an administrative problem. Staff members of government organs on basic levels used to supervise the activities of agricultural producer cooperatives apart from their official duties. Therefore, they were of the opinion that they could not fully manifest their capacities. They pointed out that they could not directly supervise production. As a result, some one made the following kind of argument: The size of agricultural producer cooperatives has been expanded, and the process of merging cooperatives is being carried on. This being the case, why not merge government organs on basic levels with agricultural producer cooperatives? Under this new arrangement, the staff members of government organs on low levels would be able to supervise production to the full extent of their capacities. This view was brought to the attention of the Chinese Communist Party. In fact, [about this time] what might be called prototypes of [communes] emerged in various places. They were usually composed of 1,000 to 2,000 households and came into being as a result of the merger of three or four kinds of cooperatives, and were again merged with administrative organs of Ch'u and Hsiang. Needless to say, they were sporadic at that time.

First Appearance of Communes in 1953

Let me give an example to explain [the development of communes]. About 700 households of farmers were living on an island called Tao in Chou-shan Hsiang in Chekiang Province. They were engaged in various trades including fishing and agriculture. Now, seven producer cooperatives on the island were engaged in feud and controversy over the use of water, fishing areas, etc. Therefore, a secretary of the Party Committee in the Hsiang made a suggestion to the Provincial Party Committee to the effect that the best way of solving the various contradictions would be to merge producer cooperatives

and to merge the management of the new body with the local administrative organs. The Provincial Party Committee ordered the merger and also obtained permission from the Provincial Government. The plan went into effect on the island in 1953. The institution newly created was still called a producer cooperative, but we see already the prototype of commune here.

After this question was brought up the central authorities and local party committees studied new developments, but they were not reported in newspapers. We thought that careful studies and analyses were necessary because the new developments had practical as well as theoretical implications. In the meantime, the number of mergers increased, and after the great expansion of 1958 the number increased by leaps and bounds.

Low Level Government Organs --- Authoritarian Function Declined and Economic Functions Expanded

After a careful analyses of the new developments, the Party arrived at the following conclusion. The authoritarian [more appropriate term seems to be political] functions of government organs on basic levels have diminished with respect to the masses. This is because the landowner class has been wiped out by the land reform and order has been maintained in rural areas as a result of suppressing reactionary elements. Thus, while the possibility of government organs on basic levels becoming dictatorial has declined, their activities in economic fields have increased. One of the most important responsibilities of government organs on basic levels is economic in nature. According to Marxism-Leninism, this development is inevitable in a socialist state or a state dictated by the working class. In other words, the necessity for dictatorial rule over the people will decline and the role [of government organs] in economic development will increase. We must build socialism and increase production by following this principle. By increasing production we will be able to overcome the backwardness of China, increase the production of daily necessities, and meet the demands created by population rise.

The Origin of the Term Commune and the Merger of Production and Administrative Organs

As a result of carrying out the kind of analysis described above, the Party lent support to the movement

and lauded it as a splendid achievement of the masses. Then, the problem of designating the movement was raised. As a result of the expansion in the size of agricultural producer cooperatives, the merger of three and four kinds of cooperatives, and the merger of government organs on basic level (Hsiang Government) and the management committees of the producer cooperatives, such various activities as industry, agriculture, commerce, education and military were brought into unity. Now, the question was what to call this body. We could call it a producer cooperative, but it was not a producer cooperative in the proper sense of the term. In fact, various terms were used in different places. It was called a state managed farm, a socialist farm, a collective farm patterned after the Soviet Kolkhos, a communist commune, and a socialist commune. The Party authorities naturally gave serious consideration to the problem of designating the new institution. It was finally decided to call it a people's commune in the belief that the term reflects fairly well the form and content of the body.

Since the commune contains within itself administrative and production systems, a question concerning the integration of the two systems was raised. Various agencies of the Party studied this problem. It was pointed out that the government organs on basic levels are united with the masses of the people through the people's commune, i.e. the commune served as a bridge between government organs and the masses. Although government organs on low levels are government agencies [and thus possess political power] they must go through the communes to reach the wide segment of the population. There are a number of advantages in this system, which reflects the actual conditions, namely that dictatorial organs are shrinking and government organs are playing an increasingly important role in production. The people's commune is one of the many ways in which the government assists the production efforts of the farmers. Our expectation of the role of government organs on low levels is that their dictatorial function will continue to decrease. According to the Marxism-Leninism such a function will ultimately disappear. The people's commune is based precisely on this principle, therefore it is correct. Thus Chairman Mao pointed out that the commune system is a product of the application of Marxist principles to the actual conditions of our country.

Now people's communes are the basic structure of our socialist state. There are a number of advantages in adopting the commune system. Various contradictions created

in the wake of the establishment of cooperatives and economic expansion have been solved by the establishment of communes. As a result of the establishment of communes, agricultural production has been increased and cultural progress and the building of socialism in rural areas have been accelerated. We must attribute the success to the socialist lines (general lines) of the Party and Government.

I will not discuss the numerous merits of the commune system, it was explained at a panel discussion dealing with agriculture (report by CHOU, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Planning of the Ministry of Agriculture). It is sufficient to add here that the attempts on the part of farmers to ward off floods and droughts through the mechanism of the producer cooperative were only partially successful; it is only through the people's commune that we can meet calamities with a strong organization.

Section Two: Ownership System and Distribution System

1. Ownership

The ownerships under the people's commune is collective. The nature of ownership is different from that of the state-managed factory or state-managed farm. To be more specific, there are three classes of ownership under the commune system.

- a. The ownership system of the people's commune
- b. The ownership system of the production brigade
(Note: It is called production team according to the resolution of the Eighth All China Congress)
- c. The ownership system of the production small teams

Most basic of the three is the ownership system of the production brigade. The production brigade distributes products, keeps an independent account, and raises revenue and spends money on its own responsibility. In normal cases this corresponds to the high class agricultural producer cooperative. It is too early to have a single group ownership system.

During the early stage of the people's commune, there were some communes which adopted the system of a single form of group ownership. This means that all products were owned by the commune, all the means of production were pooled together, and the products were

evenly distributed to all the members of the commune. The Party Central Committee criticised this system as premature.

We believe that we must undergo certain processes before we move from the three classes of ownership system to a single ownership system for the following reasons: Originally a commune is made up of a number of agricultural producer cooperatives. The national average for the number of households in a commune is 5,100 and for the number of people in it more than 20,000. Now, among the original agricultural producer cooperatives some were managed well and others not; some were favored by natural environment and others not. This being the case, what would happen if a commune is to distribute equally among the agricultural producer cooperatives which make it up? Those agricultural cooperatives which had been faring well prior to the commune system would certainly complain about losses, and thus their eagerness to produce would be adversely affected. Therefore, there must be a process whereby the comparatively backward and poor areas may catch up with the areas with better luck. When the size of production brigades becomes approximately equal and the production and income of the commune increase greatly, we may carry out the single ownership system without causing any serious problem.

Establishing a Commune in a Locality (Hsien) Criticised

During the early period of the history of commune, there were areas where only one commune was set in a locality [county]. I will cite the examples of communes in Hsiu-wu Hsien, Honan Province. There were communes comprising as many as 23,000 households, and 100,000 inhabitants each. We saw similar cases in other provinces. In connection with this problem, there were some people who said, "the bigger the people's commune the better."

However, the Party criticised this view as an error. For if the commune is too large it will be difficult to manage, and thus many problems will be created. Therefore we have decided to create a federation of communes. The federation of communes is analogous to a federal government; communes are allied, take counsel from each other, and the federation sees to it that each commune carries out government plans and directives. However, the ownership is not affected, and each commune owns its products.

Thus, various problems arising in the process of carrying into effect the people's commune system were promptly solved.

Details of Three Classes of Ownership

Now I will explain in detail what are the objects owned by three different classes of groups within the people's commune.

(1) The objects owned by the people's commune

These include such broad items as forest, grazing lands, reservoirs, machine tractor stations, and small size factories managed formerly by Hsiang governments. Annually each commune takes from each production brigade 50 percent of its public accumulated funds which is used for the commune-wide projects.

(2) The Objects Owned by the Production Brigade

This is the basic ownership system among the three mentioned. As stated previously the production brigade is the upshot of agricultural producer cooperative to be found in villages of various sizes (smaller than Hsiang - Ed.). It usually has a history of three to five years. The production brigade independently distributes, i.e. it contributes 50 percent of the public accumulated funds to the people's commune to which it belongs, subtracts public accumulated funds for itself, from the pure income and distributes the balance among the members of the brigade. The law provides that the sum of the public accumulated funds and the public welfare funds may not exceed 18 percent of the total income. Therefore, the share of individual members will be large if the total output of the brigade is large. We see here then that the differences among the incomes of individual members of a commune arise because of the differences among the incomes of the production brigades to which they belong within the same commune.

The objects owned by the production brigade are lands, livestock, and farm implements. The commune cannot arbitrarily transfer these properties to other production brigades. However, at the beginning of the commune system, there were instances where the commune displaced properties of production brigades. Livestock and farm implements of "wealthier" production brigades were transferred to other production brigades under the excuse that the properties in a commune belonged to "one family." As a result, the wealthier production brigades became restless; they lost the eagerness to produce. Therefore, the Party Central Committee, on finding such

instances, immediately ordered correction and prohibition of such practices. Of course, exceptions were allowed for the areas which suffered serious calamities. The point is that the people's commune should not merely level off differences.

(3) The Objects Owned by Production Small Teams

There are two kinds under this category. One is Surplus Production encouragement funds, and the other is the "side job" and the proceeds therefrom. The farmers are allowed to have such side jobs only on the condition that they will carry out their normal production goals.

These two kinds of "properties" owned by the production small team do not amount much---they comprise about 20 percent of the entire income [of the production small team.]

Farm implements being used by a production small team belong to the team. But the unit has only the right to use them, not ownership. Therefore, the production small team cannot arbitrarily dispose of the implements.

Unitary Ownership System and the Process Toward Ownership by the People

As explained above the direction in which the system of ownership the commune is to follow will be toward a unitary ownership but we cannot jump to that goal. We must go through certain processes. Thus, we advocate the theory of perpetual revolution. We may adopt a uniform system of ownership when the level of production increases, poor production brigades become rich, and each brigade comes on a par with the others.

However, we still believe in the "step" theory of revolution. We cannot move directly to the unitary form of ownership under the present circumstances. Once we realize a unitary form of ownership within communes, we may be able to move on to a unitary form of ownership for all people throughout the nation. This is our prospect.

Now, let me explain our prospect in more detail. A unitary system of ownership within a commune may be possible when the production of the commune is highly increased and the income of the members of the commune is on a par with the income of the workers at nationally managed factories and farms. If the production increases further, the ownership by commune will ultimately develop into the ownership by all the people. At that time, the nature of ownership for the commune will become identical

with that of ownership for the factories and farms managed by the state. It will take a considerable time to reach this point. What then, are the conditions under which the collective ownership within a commune develops into the ownership by all the people? In our opinion there are two: 1. The nature of agricultural production is fundamentally changed, i.e. when electrification and mechanization [of agriculture] are fully realized. 2. When the standard of living of members of communes is as high as that of the workers in urban areas. In a nutshell, the commune ownership will develop into the ownership by all people when the agricultural production develops highly.

II. Distribution System

Now let comment on the distribution system. The basic principle of distribution within a commune is distribution according to labor. A member is entitled to be rewarded for his labor. However, the commune indicates a number of advances over agricultural producer cooperatives in its distribution system. This is because the distribution system of the commune includes elements of supplying. However, according to law the system of supplying will not be adopted when the income is low. The relationship between the system of distribution according to labor and the system of supply can be explained thus: if the annual income of a commune is 100 Yuan, the portion to be distributed according to the system of supply should not be more than 40 Yuan, and this portion will be distributed (or supplied) according to the number of members. In other words, 30 to 40 percent of the total amount available for distribution to members of the commune is distributed equally or under the system of supply. The money [sic] must be distributed according to the amount of the labor of each member. [The rest of the money must be distributed according to the amount of labor provided by each member] (20 to 30 percent according to the report of Liu Shao-ch'i).

The system of supply was adopted because there are many large families with little labor potentialities and who therefore cannot support themselves with the income from labor. It is not easy to solve this problem fundamentally, but we must try to find a rational solution. Thus, we have adopted the method of distributing income equitably according to the number of members in addition to the method of distribution according to labor. The farmers, who have had a hard time trying to maintain a livelihood, had to resort to borrowing in order to meet their needs.

Although the credit cooperative has rendered assistance, they must repay the dept somehow. For this reason, the system of supply was adopted after the commune system was instituted. The system is based on the experience of supplying goods to staff members of the guerrilla forces against the Japanese prior to the liberation. We may consider the system of supply in the commune as a seed of communism.

Standard of Distribution within a Production Brigade

Expenses and
Accumulated Funds
(Less than 40
percent of total
income)

1. Taxes
2. Cost of Production (Seeds, Fertilizer, etc.) Management Expenses
3. Administrative Expenses
4. Public Accumulated Funds (50 percent of this will go to the commune) Less than 18 percent of total income
5. Public Welfare Funds

Funds to be
Distributed

1. Distribution according to the amount of labor (More than 60 percent of the funds to be distributed)
2. Distribution according to the system of supply (Less than 40 percent of the funds to be distributed)

(Remarks: This chart was made by Fukushima according to this and the following sections of the article.)

Part III Two Kinds of Contradictions

Contradiction between Friendly and Hostile Forces Secondary

By two kinds of contradictions we mean first the contradiction between friendly and hostile forces, and second the internal contradiction.

The first kind of contradiction still persists. Although the landlord class has been wiped out by land reform and the rich farming class has disappeared as a result of the establishment of cooperatives, the problem of contradiction between the two opposing forces exists. For those who cannot come to terms with the destruction of their old class are bent on various destructive activities. In fact, at the times of establishing cooperatives and communes they were engaged in various irrational and destructive activities. For this reason the authoritarian functions of the government organs on basic levels have "shrunk" but not ceased. They must indeed continue these functions. However, form of exercising authoritarian power⁷ should be different from that of the time of the New Democratic Revolution.

From a broad perspective, the contradiction between friendly and hostile forces now is not primary but secondary. The primary contradiction at present is the internal contradiction.

Internal Contradictions and Their Solutions

What are the internal contradictions and how can we solve them? As I mentioned in the Section on Distribution System, economic differences exist between one commune and another and one production brigade and another. Also, a contradiction exists between a family with a large labor force and one with a smaller labor force. The family with a large labor force will advocate increasing the proportion of distribution on the basis of the principle "each according to his labor," while the family with smaller labor force will desire the system of supplying goods (or system of supply). In order to overcome this contradiction the proportion of distribution according to the system of supply has been limited to 30 to 40 percents of the funds to be distributed. Three classes of ownership are instituted on order to overcome the contradiction caused by differences of wealth among production brigades.

Also, the following kind of contradiction exists between the staff members of communes and the general public. The staff members think mainly of carrying on as many public works as possible, mobilizing as much labor force as possible for this purpose, and increasing the public accumulated funds. On the other hand, there is a tendency on the part of the general public to want reduction in these activities and increase in the funds for distribution. In order to solve this contradiction, it

was decided to limit to 40 percent of the total income the sum of taxes, production costs (including seeds and fertilizer), administrative expenses, public accumulated funds, and public welfare funds. The remainder is to be distributed either according to labor or the system of supply.

In addition to these contradictions, there is the one between individuals and group within a commune. As an individual, one wants to have as much free time as possible and to increase income for his family, but the collective body wants to increase collective labor as much as possible. This contradiction was solved by limiting the minimum number of days of work for a year for men to 250, and 180 for women.

Also, there are contradictions between capitalistic thoughts and socialist thoughts and between wealthy and poor farmers within a commune. Although wealthy farmers are not faring well in group life, poor farmers think that it is fine.

The contradiction between progressive and backward ideas manifests itself from time to time in the process of actual work. For example, there is a contradiction between those who insist on planting thickly and those who hold that it must be the contrary. There is also contradiction in daily life.

We propose to solve these internal contradictions following Chairman Mao's instruction, namely, "start with unity and attain the goal of unity through criticism. This policy is fundamentally different from the one dealing with the contradiction between friendly and hostile forces. It is not permitted to use force or legal means to solve these contradictions.

Part IV Problems of Family Life

As regards family life, we have adopted the policy of progressively socializing family labor.

Changes After the Establishment of Cooperatives

A number of fundamental changes have taken place in the families of Chinese farmers since the establishment of cooperatives. First, the traditional patriarchy has all but disappeared. The patriarch used to control everything within a family; but this is changed, and now we have democratic, harmonious families.

Second, the family used to be a unit of production,

but it has become a unit of living. A home means where husband, wife and children live together.

Third, the status of women in family has been elevated. The status of women has been low; a husband used to slap wife for trivial matters. Wives were not engaged in productive labor, and were therefore without income, culture, and education; they were engaged all day long in family chores such as cooking and washing. The status of woman has been promoted since the establishment of cooperatives.

Four, the common ownership by producer cooperatives of small scale means of production is a fundamental change. Since the family moved from a unit of production to a unit of living, livestock, vehicles, ships, etc., which were privately owned have been handed over to producer cooperatives and became common properties. They were priced and purchased by the cooperatives. Membership fees for cooperatives were deducted from the total price of the properties and the payment for the remainder was made in installments. Stipulations of law are [law provides] that the period of payment may not exceed five years. By the way, the government made a loan of 1.6 billion Yuan to help poor farmers who could not pay the membership fee. It was helpful in bringing poor and medium farmers together. In other words, medium farmers cease to think that they have to contribute only seeds and fertilizer, and the poor farmers could feel as if they had joined the cooperative by their own money. Thus, they have attained equality.

Five, the system of land ownership has changed. During the early period of cooperatives, a patch of land was treated as a stock, and cooperatives paid to their members according to the area and quality of lands contributed. This period extends from 1951 to 1956. Thereafter, farmers were no longer interested in rent on land. In high class agricultural producer cooperatives the private ownership of land was completely transformed into collective ownership.

Goods Necessary for Living Privately Owned Even After Commune Came into Being

[Goods necessary for living refers to a broader category of things than the term daily necessities does.]

Goods necessary for living are privately owned. On this point, there has been no change since the establish-

ment of cooperatives. Houses, furniture, bicycles, sewing machines, etc., belong to individuals. So do savings. The "Resolution concerning the People's Commune" makes it clear that they will indefinitely remain private properties.

Socialization of Domestic Work

Now we turn to the socialization of domestic work. This is a new problem created since the establishment of communes. Domestic work was to some extent socialized during the period of cooperatives, but we have seen a great expansion recently.

Domestic work includes cooking, taking care of children, washing, making dresses, etc. In the past these chores weighed heavily on housewives, while men used to lapse into idleness soon after the meal. However, since the establishment of the communes, women were discontented about this for they wanted to work in the fields like men and breathe fresh air. As a result of the publicity given to this problem, public dining halls, nurseries, tailor shops, etc., have been established. Because of these the domestic chores have been socialized. However, in the meantime, a number of controversies arose as to the number of public dining halls, nursery facilities, how many people are to work at these places, etc. Since farmers had no experience in these things, disputes started. Family feuds also occurred. For example, the people's commune of Sung Chiang, Shih-t'ung Hsien, in Peking referred this problem to a family meeting. Housewives unanimously asserted that they would not cook at their homes, and that they would take their children to nurseries. On the other hand, elderly people insisted that foods are cold in public dining halls, and that they got worried when they take babies to nurseries. This being the case, one family came to an agreement that young couples will eat in public dining halls and the elderly people will carry the foods to home to eat. These problems are very complex. Therefore, we have decided to follow the principle of voluntary choice and to bring about improvement by a gradual process.

Lack of Materials in the Process of Socialization

There remains the fundamental problem that these welfare projects will ultimately be limited by the lack of materials. There are instances where the desired goal has not been attained solely because of such limitations. For example, public dining halls may be short of coal.

Grass and fire wood have been used as fuel in rural villages. Now large dining halls require at least firewood for cooking, but at present the supply is short. For this reason, it becomes necessary to build a smaller dining halls, to close down the halls during the busy periods for farmers, and to adopt a shift system in eating.

With respect to nurseries, China is still confronted with the problem of a shortage of medical doctors. If we build too large a nursery, we may deny proper medical care to babies. We cannot be sure that a trachoma case may not spread rapidly to other babies in the same nursery. For this reason it seems proper to build large public facilities where conditions permit, but, lacking such conditions, we should build small facilities or perhaps none at all in certain localities.

During the early period of the history of communes, being carried away by zeal, there was the tendency to build many large things at once. Soon various problems arose and we were in trouble. We became aware of such difficulties only after we had built those facilities. Now we have been able to sort out such experiences and have decided on a proper attitude toward them. In short, the rationalization of domestic labor is a process which will require much time, and in the final analysis it is dependent upon the material conditions..

Family as a Unit of Living Has Not Changed

Let me describe a Chinese family. In an ordinary family, a couple, their parents, and children live together. It is a sheer lie when Dullas said that in a people's commune a couple does not live together and that the commune is like a camp with the people of different sexes living separately. Under the influence of Utopian Socialism, Robert Owen tried to realize the dream of building a socialist farm on the New Continent (referring to New Lanark in America--Note by Fukusima). However, he failed. It is fundamentally incorrect to draw an analogy between the family life in the people's commune and the life in Owen's world (In the ideal society of Owen, children are separated from parents and left to be cared for by the society---Note by Fukusima). The family as a household unit within the commune will retain its original form, and will not be easily susceptible to changes. Although the originators of Marxism had offered a prospect on the family life in a communist society, we cannot clearly foresee what it would be like.

Household Plots Will Be Retained

At present each family within a commune has a house and a small plot adjoining the house. Here the farmers grow their own cabbages and fruits, and raise hogs, sheep, chickens, and ducks. They make the plot a side job. The plot is called a plot held by a family. At the beginning of the commune system, there were a number of communes which took action to do away with the plots retained by individuals. The government, on noticing such actions, prohibited the cancellations and legalized holding the plots. Laws stipulate that the total area of the plots held by individual farmers may not exceed five percent of the total land held by a commune, and that the land may be distributed among the members of commune equally. The proceeds from the lands held by farmers account for 20 to 30 percent of the entire income of the farmers.

In conclusion, I would like to mention one point. We are convinced that agriculture in China will develop under the commune system, "making," as Premier KIM Il-Song of Korea said, "progress as if riding a horse galloping thousands miles."

Under this system we hope to develop our agriculture, to tide over the backwardness of farm areas, and to expediate socialist industrialization of the country. Thus we can equip our country with an excellent industry from both technological and scientific points of view. The people's commune system is a gigantic mass movement in which 600 million Chinese farmers are taking part for the purpose described above.

END